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SUBJECT: SEOUL - PRESS BULLETIN; October 27, 2009

TOP HEADLINES

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Chosun Ilbo

New Flu Swept Schools; 80 Percent of Recent Infections Occurred in Children

JoongAng Ilbo

ROKG Considers Sending 300-strong Elite Unit, including Special Warfare Command Personnel, to Afghanistan

Dong-a Ilbo, Hankook Ilbo, Segye Ilbo,

Seoul Shinmun, All TVs

New Flu Spreads Like Wildfire; Five Die in One Day

Hankyoreh Shinmun

ROKG Considers Sending Police or Military Forces to Afghanistan

DOMESTIC DEVELOPMENTS

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Foreign Minister Yu Myung-hwan told the National Assembly yesterday that the ROKG is considering sending at least 130 civilian professionals to help rebuild Afghanistan and also some police or military forces to protect them. (All)

An ROKG source, in a related development, said that a decision on whether to send police troops or soldiers will be made before President Barack Obama's Nov. 18 visit to Seoul and that sending a 300-strong elite unit, including personnel from the Special Warfare Command, is a viable option. (JoongAng)

The ROKG yesterday offered North Korea 10,000 tons of corn in humanitarian aid. This relatively small amount of aid, if accepted by the North, will be the first government-level food aid since the Lee Myung-bak Administration took office early last year. (All)

Regarding the Oct. 22 remark by Adm. Michael Mullen, Chairman of the U.S. Joint Chiefs of Staff, that (the U.S.) is considering deploying part of USFK to Iraq or Afghanistan, the Defense Ministry said yesterday that the two countries have not discussed any troop redeployment. (Dong-a)

## MEDIA ANALYSIS

### -Aid for Afghanistan

All ROK media covered Foreign Minister Yu Myung-hwan's remarks during yesterday's National Assembly session, in which he said that Seoul is considering sending at least 130 civilian professionals to help rebuild Afghanistan and also some police or military forces to protect them. Foreign Minister Yu was widely quoted: "The ROKG plans to boost the medical, vocational and police training programs of the Provincial Reconstruction Team. Currently, Korean civilians are under the protection of the U.S. military. If the PRT is expanded, however, we'll need to protect our workers on our own."

In a related development, right-of-center JoongAng Ilbo quoted an ROKG source as saying that a decision on whether to send police troops or soldiers will be made before President Barack Obama's Nov. 18 visit to Seoul and that sending a 300-strong elite unit, including personnel from the Special Warfare Command, is a viable option. Left-leaning Hankyoreh Shinmun commented that even though Foreign Minister Yu said that no consideration will be given to combat troop deployment, this ROKG move can be seen as setting the stage for troop redeployment to the war-torn country.

### Possible Deployment of Some USFK Troops to Middle East

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Conservative Dong-a Ilbo noted the Oct. 22 remark by Adm. Michael Mullen, Chairman of the U.S. Joint Chiefs of Staff - that (the U.S.) is considering deploying part of USFK to Iraq or Afghanistan - and cited the ROK Defense Ministry as asserting yesterday that the two countries have not discussed any troop redeployment. The newspaper wrote in the headline: "ROK Out of Sync with U.S.? Or Prelude to USFK's Relocation?"

In an editorial, Dong-a also argued: "If the U.S. increases its troop presence in Afghanistan, it will inevitably affect U.S. troops stationed overseas. ... In order to prevent USFK troops from being deployed to Afghanistan, creating a security vacuum on the Korean Peninsula, the ROK should actively help establish peace in Afghanistan. During the Vietnam War, we sent our troops to Vietnam to avoid a USFK reduction. ... In particular, providing assistance (by dispatching) police and military troops (to Afghanistan), as the U.S. would like us to do, is absolutely essential to achieve a prompt stabilization of the region."

Right-of-center JoongAng Ilbo editorialized: "It would be difficult to blindly oppose (any plan by) the U.S. to send its troops in the ROK (to other areas of the world.) What matters is that we should come up with appropriate measures in the event of a dispatch of some USFK troops, because the move will likely weaken the ROK and U.S. combined forces' deterrence against North Korea. In particular, in a situation where tensions are mounting on the Korean Peninsula due to the North's nuclear development, we should thoroughly prepare ourselves against the worst-case scenario."

### -N. Korea

Conservative Chosun Ilbo carried a commentary headed "Let's Demand the U.S. and China Set Deadline for Resolving North Korea's Nuclear Issue." It argued: "The year 2012, by which North Korea aims to build a 'strong and prosperous country,' should be the deadline for resolving the North Korean nuclear issue. If it is crystal clear that the ROK cannot live with a nuclear-armed North Korea, how about making it plain to the U.S. and China that unless the nuclear issue is resolved by 2012, the ROK cannot help but consider a third option, which includes developing nuclear weapons of its own?"

## OPINIONS/EDITORIALS

LET'S DEMAND THE U.S. AND CHINA SET A DEADLINE FOR RESOLVING NORTH

By Editorial Writer Kim Chang-ki

President Lee Myung-bak on Saturday said, "There is no indication that North Korea has decided to abandon its nuclear weapons." He was apparently explaining why behind-the-scenes talks about an inter-Korean summit came to naught.

The (ROK) government maintains that the North Korean nuclear issue must be on the agenda of any inter-Korean summit. But simply raising the issue alone is insufficient. A strategy should be established in advance for the kind of response North Korean leader Kim Jong-il can be expected to give. Even if the North decides to abandon its nuclear weapons, however, it is uncertain if the North will tell the ROK president before the U.S. President.

Pyongyang has long demanded a reciprocal nuclear disarmament agreement with Washington. Preposterous as this may seem, the North has set it as the starting point for negotiations. It will call not only for normal relations with the U.S., but also for a peace treaty in place of the armistice agreement and the withdrawal of the U.S. Forces in Korea. Washington, too, will place other issues on the table like improved human rights in the North. The issue of Japanese citizens kidnapped to the North also remains unresolved.

Even if Pyongyang and Washington agree to (President) Lee's "grand

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bargain" of security guarantees and economic incentives in a one-shot deal to get the North to abandon its nuclear ambitions, considerable hurdles would still need to be overcome over a long period until specific accords are reached and a timetable is worked out. For example, America would insist upon the North's dismantlement of nuclear weapons before a diplomatic normalization, but the North would undoubtedly want to leave denuclearization till the very last.

In the 16-year-long nuclear tug-of-war with America, the North has learned a few things. For starters, it realized that it is effectively impossible for the U.S. and the ROK to opt for a military solution. Perhaps former President Bill Clinton's surgical strike formula, prepared in the spring of 1994, was the first and last opportunity to rid the North of its will to develop a nuclear program in a situation with the lowest risk of touching off a total war.

Pyongyang also seems believe that it can always avert extreme international pressure by returning to the negotiation table. In a desperate situation, it could again agree to old formulas like freezing nuclear activities and international inspections. The regime, paying no attention whatsoever to the plight of its people due to international sanctions, thinks it can hold out for a long time. Instead, it is the international community, including the ROK and the U.S. that is worried about humanitarian concerns.

Until Washington, Beijing and Seoul discourage these calculations in unison, it will be impossible to resolve the North Korean nuclear issue. Some pundits believe that the North, despite its two nuclear tests, has yet to turn its nuclear devices into usable weapons. Even if that is true, it is merely a matter of time until it does.

The year 2012, by which North Korea aims to build a 'strong and prosperous country,' should be the deadline for resolving the North Korean nuclear issue. If it is crystal clear that the ROK cannot live with a nuclear-armed North Korea, how about making it plain to the U.S. and China that unless the nuclear issue is resolved by 2012, the ROK cannot help but consider a third option, which includes developing nuclear weapons of its own? China, its biggest trade partner, would be able to deal the economy a fatal blow at any time, and the ROK depends on the U.S. for fuel for nuclear power generation. There is little room for maneuver.

Should the ROK therefore leave matters to China and the U.S.? The

U.S., if it has given up on a military solution, should be pushing ahead with sanctions and negotiations but lacks the decisive means, while China, seeking stability on the Korean Peninsula, is hobbled by the North Korean regime. Those are the reasons the ROK must look for new ways of breaking the stalemate.

TROOP DEPLOYMENT TO AFGHANISTAN SHOULD BE IN ACCORD WITH NATIONAL INTEREST AND INTERNATIONAL CONTRIBUTION  
(Dong-a Ilbo, October 27, 2009, page 35)

Foreign Minister Yu Myung-hwan told the National Assembly yesterday that the ROKG is considering sending civilian professionals to help rebuild Afghanistan and some police or military forces to protect them. Minister Yu said that the number of civilians to be deployed will be 130, adding that the ROKG is discussing ways to protect them on its own. The ROKG must devise ways to guard them if it plans to send about a hundred civilians to Afghanistan where the Taliban reigns. According to other sources, the ROKG is considering dispatching at least several hundred (police or military) officers.

Expanding assistance to Afghanistan is needed to bolster the ROK-U.S. alliance. Last week U.S. Secretary of Defense Robert Gates said, "We obviously welcome any contribution that any countries around the world are prepared to make, but that decision - what and how much to contribute - is entirely up to the ROK." This seems to be a roundabout way of requesting assistance from the ROK. In order

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to shore up the ROK-U.S. alliance, we should take active steps when the U.S. needs help. If we ignore an ally's difficulties, it may jeopardize the "Joint vision for the Alliance of the ROK and the U.S." that the two leaders agreed to in June.

The Obama Administration has made an all-out effort to stabilize Afghanistan since taking office. There are (currently) 65,000 U.S. troops in Afghanistan but the USG plans to send an additional 34,000 troops.

If the U.S. increases its troop presence in Afghanistan, it will inevitably affect U.S. troops stationed overseas. Chairman of the U.S. Joint Chiefs of Staff Adm. Michael Mullen said that the Pentagon is discussing whether troops will be deployed from the ROK to Iraq and Afghanistan in coming years. In order to prevent USFK troops from being deployed to Afghanistan, creating a security vacuum on the Korean Peninsula, the ROK should actively help establish peace in Afghanistan. During the Vietnam War, we sent our troops to Vietnam to avoid a USFK reduction.

As the world's tenth largest economy, the ROK cannot disregard efforts to build peace in Afghanistan. The Afghan people have been living in a state of war for eight years. For the ROK, which fought back against the North with the help of the UN during the Korean War, providing aid to Afghanistan is one of the ways to repay the debt it owes to the international community.

In particular, providing assistance (by dispatching) police and military troops (to Afghanistan), as the U.S. would like us to do, is absolutely essential to achieve a prompt stabilization of the region.

ROKG SHOULD HURRY TO PREPARE FOR POSSIBLE U.S. DEPLOYMENT OF USFK TROOPS TO MIDDLE EAST  
(JoongAng Ilbo, October 27, 2009, page 46)

In a noteworthy move, the U.S. is reportedly considering dispatching some United States Forces Korea (USFK) troops to Afghanistan. In response to a question by a USFK soldier during a visit to the ROK last week, Adm. Michael Mullen, Chairman of the U.S. Joint Chiefs of Staff said that this is one of the issues the U.S. is discussing with the ROK. This has sparked concerns that if some of the 28,500 USFK ground forces are deployed to Afghanistan, it likely will undermine the security of the ROK. In particular, observers say that this move may coincide with the transfer of wartime operational

control to the ROK scheduled for April 2012, thus dealing a further blow to the U.S.-ROK joint forces' capability to deter North Korean provocations. Foreign Minister Yu Myung-hwan told the National Assembly on October 26 that the ROK plans to deploy 130 civilian professionals to help rebuild Afghanistan and also some police or military forces to protect them.

The ROK and the U.S. agreed in November 2006 to give "strategic flexibility" to USFK. This means that the role of USFK is expanded to defend not only the Korean Peninsula but also overseas U.S. bases. Therefore, the U.S. can deploy USFK troops to other areas anytime it wants.

It would be difficult to blindly oppose (any plan by) the U.S. to send its troops stationed in the ROK (to other areas of the world.) What matters is that we should come up with appropriate measures in the event of a dispatch of some USFK troops, because the move likely will weaken the ROK and U.S. combined forces' deterrence against North Korea. In particular, in a situation where tensions are mounting on the Korean Peninsula due to the North's nuclear development, we should thoroughly prepare ourselves against any worst-case scenario.

The best-case scenario would be that USFK troops are not deployed to Afghanistan. This scenario still may be realized through close discussions with the U.S. Analysts believe that Minister Yu's official announcement to provide additional assistance to Afghanistan was made considering this ROK position. Also, we should

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take measures against any inevitable deployment of USFK troops and prepare for a possible reduction in USFK that may result when the temporary deployment is prolonged. The ROK should hurry to strengthen its own forces. The ROK also should seek to deploy additional navy and air forces to replace USFK troops if they are dispatched to Afghanistan. In addition, we should actively consider delaying the timetable for the transfer of wartime operational control to the ROK so that it does not happen at the same time as a dispatch of USFK troops to the Middle East.

#### FEATURES

ROK OUT OF SYNC WITH THE U.S.? OR PRELUDE TO USFK'S RELOCATION?  
(Dong-a Ilbo, October 27, 2009, Page 8)

By Reporter Yoon Sang-ho

Controversy is mounting over the statement by the Chairman of the U.S. Joint Chiefs of Staff that the U.S. is considering pulling some USFK troops out of the ROK.

After the statement by Chairman of the U.S. Joint Chiefs of Staff Adm. Michael Mullen that the U.S. is considering deploying part of USFK to Iraq or Afghanistan in coming years was made public, controversy over the true meaning of the remark is mounting inside and outside the military.

Regarding Adm. Mullen's statement, the Ministry of National Defense explained on October 26, "The two countries have not discussed any troop redeployment." Minister of Foreign Affairs and Trade Yu Myung-hwan also noted at the National Assembly's Foreign Affairs, Trade and Unification Committee on the same day, "The USFK's overseas redeployment was not specifically discussed (at any meetings), including the recent ROK-U.S. Security Consultative Meeting (SCM)."

A key ROKG official implied, however, that there were discussions between the ROK and the U.S., saying, "Once the process of extending the tours of USFK servicemen to 'three-year family accompanied tours' is completed, it will be possible to manage USFK personnel in a flexible way, such as using the ROK as a stationing base from which USFK soldiers can be temporarily dispatched to the Middle East region." He added, however, "Such management will be possible only after 2015 or 2016, when the tour normalization policy is fully

implemented."

The ROK and U.S. military authorities appear perplexed. Although both sides agreed in early 2006 to the USFK's strategic flexibility, under which USFK troops will be deployed to other troubled parts of the world with the ROKG's consent, the pullout of USFK troops is a sensitive issue, which could stir up controversy over a "security vacuum."

The USFK said on October 26, "We are looking at Adm. Mullen's statement again and are determining whether to announce an official position." The ROK defense ministry is also at a loss. For the ministry, it is hard to understand why Adm. Mullen mentioned the possibility of pulling USFK troops out of the ROK, two days before the ROK and the U.S. agreed to maintain USFK presence at the current level (28,500 soldiers) during the 41st SCM. An official said, "If the U.S. does not explain exactly why Adm. Mullen made the remark, it will increase suspicion and misunderstanding."

Some observers believe that this controversy is attributed to the ROK being out of sync with the U.S. They speculate that after both sides agreed at a closed-door meeting to maintain the USFK at the current level and to deal with its overseas deployment under the principle of strategic flexibility, this (plan to deploy troops off the peninsula) may have been revealed in the process of explaining (the flexible deployment plan) to U.S. servicemen.

At any rate, experts expect that since the U.S. has now clarified

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that USFK is not exempt from the policy of strategic flexibility, which applies to all U.S. soldiers around the world, the USFK's redeployment to other part of the world will come sooner or later. A military official commented, "We expect that about 500 U.S. troops may be pulled out of the ROK."

STEPHENS